

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.**

CODE OF WARTIME PRACTICES

For American Broadcasters

STATION MANAGERS

This document is vital to your function as a voluntary censor. See to it that every member of your staff is acquainted with its contents. If more copies are needed, we will supply them upon request. This is the guide by which you are requested to censor your own operations.

EDITION OF DECEMBER 1, 1943

**UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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SPECIAL NOTE

The Code of Wartime Practices is issued pursuant to instructions by the President, who commissioned the Office of Censorship to supervise domestic voluntary censorship.

You are reminded that whenever anyone else, in any part of the country, makes a request which appears unreasonable or out of harmony with the Code, you are at liberty to appeal at once to the Office of Censorship.

Much confusion would be avoided if such appeals were more frequent.

(II)

CODE OF WARTIME PRACTICES

Edition of December 1, 1943

This is the third revision of the Code of Wartime Practices for American Broadcasters.

The principle of censorship remains the same. It is voluntary and broadcast management is responsible for fulfilling the function in its own medium. The broadcasting industry, to this end, should be constantly aware of the dangers inherent in (1) news broadcasts; (2) routine programming; and (3) commercial copy.

To combat these dangers effectively, broadcast management must be in complete control of all programming every minute of every day of operation. This responsibility should not be delegated to anyone over whom the management does not exercise control.

The facilities of the Office of Censorship are at the disposal of broadcasters 24 hours a day, to assist them with consultation and advice when any doubt arises as to the application of this Code. The following are the principal advisory guideposts (as revised) which are intended to aid in discharging censorship responsibilities:

I. NEWS BROADCASTS AND COMMENTARIES

Broadcasters should edit all news in the light of this Code's suggestions and of their own specialized knowledge, regardless of the medium or means through which such news is obtained.

Special attention is directed to the fact that all of the requests in this Code are modified by a proviso that the information listed may properly be broadcast when authorized by *appropriate authority*. News on all of these subjects will become available usually from Government sources; but in war, timeliness is an important factor and the Government unquestionably is in the best position to decide when disclosure is timely.

Caution is advised against reporting, under the guise of opinion, speculation, or prediction, any fact which has not been released by appropriate authority.

It is requested that news in any of the following classifications be kept off the air unless made available for broadcast by appropriate authority or specifically cleared by the Office of Censorship.

(a) **Weather.**—Weather forecasts other than those officially released by the Weather Bureau. Mention of wind direction or barometric pressure in current or past weather (including summaries and recapitulations) except when contained in EMERGENCY warnings released specifically for broadcast by the Weather Bureau authorities.

NOTE.—Special events reporters, covering sports or any outdoor assignments (fires, floods, storms, etc.), are cautioned especially against mention of wind directions.

(b) **Armed forces.**—Type and movements of United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps units, within or without continental United States, including information concerning—

Location.	Routes.
Identity.	Schedules.
Exact Composition.	Assembly for Embarkation.
Equipment.	Prospective Embarkation.
Strength.	Actual Embarkation.
Destination.	

Such information regarding troops of friendly nations on American soil.

Revelation of possible future military operations by identifying an individual or group known for a specialized activity.

Exceptions:

(1) *Armed forces in the United States.*—Those in training camps and units assigned to domestic police duty, as regards names, addresses, location, and general character.

(2) *Armed forces outside the United States.*—Names and locations (without unit identifications) if presence of United States forces in area has been announced officially.

Names of naval personnel without mention of ships, unless said ships have been announced by the Navy as lost or damaged.

(c) **Ships (convoys, etc.).**—Type and movements of United States Navy, or merchant vessels, or transports, of convoys, of neutral vessels, or vessels of nations opposing the Axis powers in any waters, including information concerning—

Identity.	Port of Departure.
Location.	Ports of Call.
Port of Arrival.	Nature of Cargoes.
Time of Arrival.	Assembly.
Prospect of Arrival.	Personnel.

Enemy naval or merchant vessels in any waters, their

Type.	Location.
Identity.	Movements.

Secret information or instructions about sea defenses, such as

Buoys, lights and other guides to navigators.	Mine fields and other harbor defenses.
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Ships in construction—

Type.	Size.
Number.	Location.

Advance information on dates of launchings, commissionings.

Physical description, technical details of shipyards.

Movement of diplomatic exchange ships under direction of the State Department.

Exceptions: Movements of merchant vessels on Great Lakes or other sheltered inland waterways unless specific instances require special ruling.

(d) **Damage by enemy land or sea attacks.**—Information on damage to military objectives in continental United States or possessions, including—

Docks.	Public Utilities.
Railroads.	Industrial plants engaged
Airfields.	in war work.

Counter-measures or plans of defense.

Appropriate authority.—For information about damage from enemy attacks to military objectives on land within continental United States or possessions is the commanding officer in the zone of combat, or the Army Bureau of Public Relations, Washington. (For the Hawaiian Islands, the Navy.)

(e) **Action at sea.**—Information about the sinking or damaging from war causes of war or merchant vessels in any waters.

Appropriate authority.—Appropriate authority for results of United States naval action against enemy vessels in or near American waters is the commanding officer of the district in which the action occurs, or the Naval Office of Public Relations, Washington.

(f) **Enemy air attack.**—Estimates of number of planes involved; number of bombs dropped; damage to—

Fortifications.	Public Utilities.
Docks.	Industrial plants engaged
Railroads.	in war work.
Ships.	All other military objectives.
Airfields.	

Warnings or reports of impending air raids; remote ad lib broadcasts dealing with raids, during or after action.

Mention of any raid in the continental United States during its course, except on appropriate authority of the designated representatives of the Defense Commander in whose area the raid occurs or the War Department in Washington.

News which plays up horror or sensationalism; deals with or refers to unconfirmed reports or versions; refers to exact routes taken by enemy planes, or describes counter-measures of defense, such as troop mobilization or movements, or the number or location of antiaircraft guns or searchlights in action.

Exceptions: After an air raid, general descriptions of action after all-clear has been given. Nothing in this request is intended to prevent or curtail constructive reporting or programming of such matters as feats of heroism, incidents of personal courage, or response to duty by the military or by civilian defense workers.

(g) **Accredited military and naval correspondents.**—No provisions in this Code of Wartime Practices for American Broadcasters modify obligations assumed by accredited correspondents who accompany Army or Navy forces or are given special accrediting by the War or Navy departments to visit restricted areas in the United States.

These commitments, under War and Navy department practice, pledge such correspondents to submit to censorship anything they write in zones of combat or restriction, or what they may write at

a later date as result of their observation in these zones. The military department concerned is the censorship agency for all such material.

In case of a protracted enemy attack on the continental United States, necessitating military declaration of a combat zone, censorship within such an area would, of necessity, be by military authority. Accrediting of news gatherers for such a zone will be as in any other combat area. In the case of such an attack and declaration of a military zone of combat, the requests in this Code remain applicable to broadcast operations outside the declared area.

(h) **Planes.**—*Air units.*—Military air units of the United States and the United Nations as to—

Disposition.
Missions.
Movements.

New Characteristics.
Strength.

Information concerning new military aircraft and related items of equipment or detailed information on performance, construction and armament of current military aircraft or related items; military activities of commercial air lines or the Civil Air Patrol.

(i) **Fortifications and air installations.**—Location and description of fortifications, including—

Coast Defense Emplacements.
Antiaircraft guns and other air defense installations.
Defense Installation details of public airports used for military purposes.
Camouflaged objects.
Location of specially constructed bomb shelters.
Information concerning installations for military purposes outside the United States.

(j) **Sabotage.**—Specifications (including information on bottle-necks) which saboteurs could use to damage military objectives. No mention of sabotage should be made except on appropriate authority of the military agency concerned or the Department of Justice.

(k) **Production** (see also **Sabotage**).—New or secret Allied military weapons, identity and location of plants making them; designs or rate of production or consumption of any specific type of war matériel; formulas, processes or experiments connected with war production.

Information on imports, exports or Government stock piles of critical or strategic materials, such as tin, natural rubber, uranium, chromium, tantalum, manganese, quinine, tungsten, platinum and high-octane gasoline.

Movement or transportation of war matériel.

NOTE.—Progress of production for general categories of war matériel such as planes, tanks, guns, vehicles and munitions may be reported, but statistical information on specific weapons such as bombers, fighter planes, 155 mm. guns, medium tanks, etc., should be avoided without appropriate authority.

(l) **Combat zone interviews and letters.**—Interviews with service men or civilians from combat zones (including accounts of escapes from foreign territory) should be submitted for review before broadcast, either to the Office of Censorship or to the appropriate Army or Navy Public Relations Officer. Letters from combat zones

are censored at the source for *home and family consumption only*. When used on the air, broadcasters should measure the contents of such letters in the light of the provisions of this Code. In case of any doubt, consult the Office of Censorship. (See clause on Armed Forces, regarding unit identifications.)

(m) **War prisoners, internees, civilian prisoners.**—Information as to arrival, movements, confinement, escape, or identity of military prisoners from war zones; identity of persons arrested or interned as enemy aliens; locations or operations of alien internment camps; place of confinement of civilians convicted of treason, espionage, or sabotage.

NOTE.—The appropriate authority for information as to war prisoners or their camps is the War Department; for escaped prisoners, the War Department or the F. B. I.; for information as to enemy aliens or their camps, or civilian prisoners described above, the Department of Justice. In any inquiry, please make certain whether the individuals involved are military prisoners of war, enemy aliens, or resettled citizens or aliens.

(n) **Military intelligence.**—Information concerning war intelligence, or the operations, methods, or equipment of counter-intelligence of the United States, its allies, or the enemy.

Information concerning secret detection devices.

Information concerning secret United States or Allied means or systems of military communication, including the establishment of new International points of communication.

(o) **War news coming into the United States.**—War information originating outside United States territory may be broadcast if its origin is made plain.

Any recordings or information for broadcast gathered in any form that is sent across the United States-Canadian border should contain nothing that will conflict with the censorship of the country in which the information originates.

(p) **General.**—

Casualties.—Identification of combat casualties until made available for publication by the War or Navy Departments or the next of kin.

Strategy.—Secret war plans, or diplomatic negotiations or conversations which concern military operations.

Art objects, historical data.—Information disclosing the new location of national archives, or of public or private art treasures.

Diplomatic information.—Information about the movements of the President of the United States (including advance notice of the place from which he will broadcast); information of official military or diplomatic missions of the United States or of any other nation opposing the Axis powers—routes, schedules, destination, within or without continental United States; movements of ranking Army or Naval officers and staffs on official missions; movements of other individuals or units on military or diplomatic missions.

II. PROGRAMS

These suggestions are made in order that broadcasters will have a pattern to follow in accomplishing the most important censorship function of program operation: keeping the microphone under the complete control of the station management, or its representatives.

(a) **Request programs.**—*Music.*—No telephoned or telegraphed requests for musical selections should be accepted. No requests for musical selections made by word-of-mouth at the origin of broadcast, whether studio or remote, should be honored.

Talk.—No telephoned or telegraphed requests for service announcements should be honored, except as hereinafter qualified. Such service announcements would include information relating to—

Lost pets.
“Swap” ads.
Mass meetings.
Personal messages.

Club meetings,
Club programs, etc.
Vital statistics.

The same precautions should be observed in accepting “classified advertisements” for broadcasting.

No telephoned, telegraphed, or word-of-mouth dedications or program features or segments thereof should be broadcast. No telephoned, telegraphed, or word-of-mouth auction bids, contributions or similar acknowledgments from listeners, should be broadcast.

Exceptions.—Emergency announcements (such as those seeking blood donors, doctors, lost persons, lost property, etc.) may be handled in conventional manner if the broadcaster confirms their origin. They should emanate from the police, the Red Cross, or similar recognized governmental or civilian agency.

Service announcements may be honored when source is checked and material is submitted in writing, subject to rewriting by station continuity staff. Requests for the broadcast of greetings or other programs to commemorate personal anniversaries may be honored if the actual broadcast is not made on the anniversary date or at the time or on the date designated in the request.

ALL requests, subject to the above qualifications, may be honored when submitted via mail, or otherwise in writing if they are held for an unspecified length of time and if the broadcaster staggers the order in which such requests are honored, rewriting any text which may be broadcast.

(b) **Quiz programs.**—It is requested that all audience-participation type quiz programs originating from remote points, either by wire, transcription, or short wave, should not be broadcast, except as qualified hereinafter. Any program which permits the public accessibility to an open microphone is dangerous and should be carefully supervised. Because of the nature of quiz programs, in which the public is not only permitted access to the microphone but encouraged to speak into it, the danger of usurpation by the enemy is enhanced. The greatest danger here lies in the informal interview conducted in a small group—10 to 25 people. In larger groups, where participants are selected from a theater audience, for example, the danger is not so great.

Generally speaking, any quiz program originating remotely, wherein the group is small, wherein no arrangement exists for investigating the background of participants and wherein extraneous background noises cannot be eliminated at the discretion of the broadcaster, should not be broadcast. Included in this classification are all such productions as man-in-the-street interviews, airport interviews, train terminal interviews, and so forth.

In all studio-audience type quiz shows, where the audience from which interviewees are to be selected numbers less than 50 people, program conductors are asked to exercise special care. They should devise a method whereby no individual seeking participation can be *guaranteed* participation.

(c) **Forums and interviews.**—During forums in which the general public is permitted extemporaneous comment, panel discussions in which more than two persons participate, and interviews conducted by authorized employees of the broadcasting company, broadcasters should devise methods guaranteeing against the release of any information which might aid the enemy as described in Section I of the Code. If there is doubt concerning the acceptability of material to be used in interviews, complete scripts should be submitted to the Office of Censorship for review. (See Par. (7) sec. I.)

(d) **Special-events reporting (ad lib).**—Special-events reporters should study carefully the restrictions suggested in Section I of the Code, especially those referring to interviews and descriptions following enemy offensive action. Reporters and commentators should guard against use of descriptive material which might be employed by the enemy in plotting an area for attack.

If special programs which might be considered doubtful enterprises in view of our effort to keep information of value from the enemy are planned, outlines should be submitted to the Office of Censorship.

(See also Par. (a), sec. I.)

(e) **Simulated air raids, blackouts.**—In view of the provisions contained in Paragraph (f), Section I, of this Code, which prescribe radio silence at the scene of an air raid until the "all clear," it is the belief of this office, in which the Office of Civilian Defense concurs, that broadcasting stations should not employ their facilities during a simulated air raid in any way which would encourage listeners to rely upon the medium for advice and assistance should an actual raid occur. This is intended to place no proscription on the legitimate broadcast of descriptions and commentaries dealing with simulated air raids and blackouts after the events have been conducted.

(f) **Commercial continuity.**—Broadcasters should be alert to prevent the transmission of subversive or restricted information through the use of commercial continuity in program or announcement broadcasts. In this connection, the continuity editor should regard his responsibility as equal to that of the news editor.

III. FOREIGN LANGUAGE BROADCASTS

(a) **Personnel.**—The Office of Censorship, by direction of the President, is charged with the responsibility of removing from the air all those engaged in foreign language broadcasting who, in the judgment of appointed authorities in the Office of Censorship, endanger the war effort of the United Nations by their connections, direct or indirect, with the medium. Bases of judgment in exercising this function will be twofold: (1) current material written for broadcast or broadcast over American facilities; (2) past and/or present conduct of the individual, including evidence substantiating his sympathy with the regimes of our enemies. This function of the Office of Censorship is not intended to relieve in any measure the full respon-

sibility resting with the management of the foreign language broadcasting station to employ only those whose loyalty he does not question. There extends to such broadcast management the additional responsibility to report to the Office of Censorship the names of any personnel in this field who might be suspected for any reason.

(b) **Scripts.**—Station managements are requested to require all persons who broadcast in a foreign language to submit to the management in advance of broadcast complete scripts or transcriptions of such material. (This procedure does not apply to programs originated and produced by the Office of War Information and distributed to foreign language stations.) It is further requested that this material be checked "on the air" against the approved script and that no deviations therefrom be permitted. These scripts or transcriptions should be kept on file at the station.

(c) **Censors and monitors.**—In order that these functions can be performed in a manner consistent with the demands of security, station managers are reminded that their staffs should include capable linguists as censors and monitors whose duty it will be to review all scripts in advance of broadcast and check them during broadcast against deviation.

(d) **Submission of scripts.**—From time to time the Office of Censorship will ask foreign language broadcasters to submit specified scripts to this office for review. If a station obtains its foreign language program from another originating point via network, these requirements do not apply; in such event the originating station will be held responsible for fulfilling the requests contained herein.

(e) Station managements are reminded that all provisions of this code, as outlined in Sections I and II, apply equally to foreign language broadcasting.

Broadcasters should ask themselves, "Is this information of value to the enemy?" If the answer is "Yes," they should not use it. If doubtful, they should measure the material against the Code.

From time to time the Office of Censorship may find it necessary to issue further communications either to interpret certain existing requests, amend or delete them, or otherwise to cover special emergency conditions. Such communications will be addressed to managers of radio stations and networks and should receive preferential attention.

If information concerning any phase of the war effort should be made available anywhere, which seems to come from doubtful authority, or to be in conflict with the general aims of these requests; or if special restrictions requested locally or otherwise by various authorities seem unreasonable or out of harmony with this summary, it is recommended that the question be submitted at once to the Office of Censorship, Washington. Telephone: Executive 3800; Teletype: WA-434.

THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP,
BYRON PRICE, *Director*.

DECEMBER 1, 1943.

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